



SENATE TAXATION

DATE 2-15-07EXHIBIT NO. 3BILL NO. SB-418

We are writing in support of SB 418, sponsored by Senator Dan Weinberg. Whitefish is a unique community such as other Montana communities that benefit from diverse recreational opportunities.

Our lodging community extends well beyond our city boundaries and we benefit from each other. Our guests who stay in Whitefish and the surrounding Whitefish areas may hike in Glacier Park and Ski Big Mountain, but enjoy spending time in downtown Whitefish and the surrounding areas.

The current law does not encourage joint marketing efforts between area marketing partners. The Big Mountain Resort and several mountain properties have asked for a portion of their lodging tax be distributed to the WCVB to allow for cooperation in their marketing efforts, but the current law does not allow this. They are a big part of our community and why our guests stay in Whitefish.

Whitefish could expand their zoning jurisdiction to include their marketing partners, and SB 418 would allow a portion of the lodging tax revenue to include this expanded zoning jurisdiction and be returned to the community for joint marketing. Recently the Whitefish zoning jurisdiction has been expanded and it makes sense to incorporate these areas and marketing partners. This bill allows our community to work together in a more comprehensive and efficient way.

Sincerely,

Mary Person

Karen Crittenden

Harbor Mountain Properties